

RIEVAULX ABBEY, YORKSHIRE.

THE ruins of ancient monastic buildings that are to be seen in different parts of England not only excite the admiration of lovers of picturesque effect, but serve to remind us of the great changes which have taken place in our country since the time when those buildings shone forth in their original splendour, and when the showy and imposing ceremonies of the Romish ritual were performed with all the advantages which wealth and power, and noble edifices could give them. And if imagination thus takes us back to the days when the Romish church was dominant in our island, so will the sight of those ruined abbeys and monasteries recall to mind the extraordinary and arbitrary proceedings by which the overthrow of these institutions was effected. The most sincere Protestant will hardly attempt to justify the proceedings of that money-loving monarch, Henry the Eighth, who enriched his own coffers at the expense of the existing institutions of the country, while under the appearance or pretext of religious zeal, he dissolved the monkish communities, and appropriated a large portion of the wealth they had accumulated to his own private use.

The abbey we have represented above, was one of the first class or more important monastic institutions seized by the crown; and before we describe it in its present state of ruin, we will briefly notice the proceedings of the avaricious monarch, with respect to abbeys in general, leaving out of the question the motives which actuated him; but which to those acquainted with history are sufficiently apparent.

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When the king had settled in his own mind the fate of the monastic institutions, he took the precaution of commencing with the lesser establishments; and commissioners were appointed to make a regular visitation of the religious houses. Accordingly, in the year 1536, a bill passed both houses of parliament, which made it lawful for the king to take possession of and appropriate the revenues of all monastic establishments whose annual income did not exceed two hundred pounds. He had also the power of granting the buildings and lands to any persons he might choose, on the condition of such persons keeping an honest house and household, and ploughing the same average number of acres as had been previously cultivated.

We cannot now ascertain the precise number of the lesser monastic institutions which were put down by virtue of this act, but it appears to have been about three hundred and eighty. It was likewise calculated that there would be an addition of thirty-two thousand pounds to the annual revenue of the crown, besides the receipt of a hundred thousand pounds in money, plate, and jewels.

The commissioners appointed to carry this bill into effect went to each religious house of the class affected by it, and made a formal announcement of its dissolution to the superior, making at the same time an inventory of the effects, securing the convent-seal and title-deeds, and making arrangements for the future support of its inhabitants. Some of these arrangements were as follows.—The superior received a pension for life, the older

monks were sent away to the larger monasteries, or were promised employment in case they wished to leave the monastic life; the younger priests, namely, those who were under twenty-four years of age, were absolved from their vows, and admonished to pursue some industrious calling by which they might earn their livelihood.

Desirable as these results were, they could not be accomplished, especially in the way in which Henry the Eighth set about them, without causing great excitement, and a strong feeling of opposition in many quarters. An immediate evil was also felt in the claims of the poor, who had received relief at these institutions, and were now suddenly deprived of their aid. A strong feeling was also exhibited on the part of those who, as the descendants of the families by whom monasteries were endowed and enriched, considered that if the revenues were to be taken away from those monasteries, they ought to revert to them, as their lawful right, instead of being given to the king. The manifest perversion of the gift, from the uses designed by the givers, also offered just cause of complaint. Accordingly, in the same year in which the obnoxious bill had passed, we find that an insurrectionary movement took place in the northern counties, and that it was joined by a large body of the gentry, as well as by many knights and nobles, and even by the Archbishop of York. This manifestation of public feeling assumed a formidable appearance, and was of a character to arouse the popular sympathy. The devices painted on the banners of the party were the image of Christ crucified, with the chalice, and other emblems of their faith. The movement was invested with a sacred character, and was called "The Pilgrimage of Grace." But all was of no avail. The spirit of inquiry was abroad, and numbers that viewed with indignation the arbitrary proceedings of the monarch, would yet have been sorry to perpetuate a state of things from which they had long sighed to be delivered. Therefore the insurrection was effectually put down, and the king had time to turn his attention to the remaining monasteries, and to complete his plans for their extermination.

It soon became apparent to all parties that the king had determined on dealing with the large monasteries in precisely the same manner as he had done with the smaller ones; but a longer period was occupied in the preliminary steps. A long and close investigation was carried on, of the circumstances and revenues of each monastic establishment. In 1539 (three years after the former proceeding) a bill was brought into parliament, by which all the property, moveable and immoveable, of the monasteries, was vested in the crown, and no later than the following spring, 1540, all that property had been surrendered. A scale of pensions was formed, according to which the different classes of persons ejected from monasteries were provided for. In giving it to our readers we must remind them of the much higher value of money in those days over our own. The pensions of the superiors of monasteries and convents varied from six pounds to two hundred and sixty-six; those of the priors of cells from thirteen to twenty pounds; those of the other monks from two to six pounds, with a gratuity to supply immediate wants. The pensions for nuns averaged about four pounds. At this suppression of religious houses it was found that the annual revenue enjoyed by those communities was nearly a hundred and forty-three thousand pounds.

While contemplating this wholesale work of the king, we must not suppose that he abolished all these religious establishments without taking any steps to supply the deficiency thus created, or to provide for the religious instruction of the people. On the contrary, he created six new episcopal sees, *i. e.*, those of Westminster, Oxford, Peterborough, Bristol, Chester, and Gloucester, and also converted fourteen abbeys or priories into cathedral or collegiate churches. But we cannot longer dwell on

the proceedings which marked the reign of Henry the Eighth as a most important era in the history of the Church and country. We must now revert to the Abbey of Rievaulx, and notice the share it had in the spoliation of the period.

This beautiful monastery was like the rest surrendered to the king, who took possession of its revenues (which amounted to about three hundred and eighty pounds per annum), its plate, and jewels. The commissioners appointed for the purpose, visited the venerable edifice, broke the seal, and assigned pensions to the members. The furniture and goods were sold, and the church, cloisters, and apartments for the monks, were stripped of every saleable article. The abbot's apartments and the offices were not meddled with, but left for the convenience of the next occupant. The land was sold at twenty years' purchase, the buildings at fifteen years' purchase, the buyers holding them of the crown, and paying a reserved rent.

The Abbey of Rievaulx was founded by Sir Walter d'Espey in 1131, and dedicated to the Virgin Mary. By the death of his only son, Sir Walter was left without an heir to his wealth, and he therefore devoted it to the building and endowment of religious edifices. Not only Rievaulx, but Kirkham, in the East Riding of Yorkshire, and Warden, in Bedfordshire, were built and endowed by him. Sir Walter was buried in Rievaulx Abbey in 1153. Rievaulx is situated in the North Riding of Yorkshire, half-way between Ripon and Scarborough, and about twenty-five miles north of York. The principal remains of this abbey (which in its original state must have been one of the most magnificent in the kingdom,) are the church and the refectory. The former consists of the choir and two of its side aisles, the transept with its aisles, and the commencement of the tower. The nave is demolished, but its site is still visible. The chief parts of the building are in the early pointed style, with lancet windows, as they prevailed in the reign of Henry the Third. The pillars of the choir with their arches, and a double tier of corresponding arches, are in a good state of preservation. The refectory is spacious, and is preceded by a hall, to which was attached a circular arched entrance, but ribbed in the early pointed style. There are also the remains of a music gallery, and of a circular staircase leading to it. The nave appears to have been one hundred and sixty-six feet long, and fifty-nine wide; the refectory is one hundred and twenty-five feet long and thirty-seven wide; and the choir one hundred and forty-four long, and sixty-three wide. The abbey stands in a well-wooded valley, amidst a landscape that is very pleasing to the eye, whose features are scattered cottages, a winding river, two picturesque bridges, woody heights, and the splendid ruin in the centre.

On the Dissolution, the site of the abbey was granted by the king to Thomas, earl of Rutland, a descendant of Sir Walter d'Espey. Catherine, daughter of Francis, earl of Rutland, was married to George Villiers, duke of Buckingham, and his son, the second duke of Buckingham, sold the land to Sir Charles Duncombe, in whose family it has remained. Thomas Duncombe, Esq. the grand-nephew of the former, in 1758, made a noble terrace on the brink of the hill which overlooks the ruin. Altogether the Abbey of Rievaulx is esteemed by artists as one of the finest existing subjects for the pencil.

SHALL we, when Providence destroys,  
Like Jonah's gourd, our cherished joys,  
The wisdom frowardly arraign,  
That warps our web of life with pain?  
No! let us with a pious trust,  
Though bent by sorrow to the dust,  
Confide, while we submissive bow,  
That He will cheer who chastens now;  
And to a loftier faith give scope,  
Nor mourn as those who have no hope.—PRINGLE.



## EASY LESSONS ON REASONING.

## LESSON XVI.

## PART II.

§ 10. Now the mode in which these words\* have been thus transferred (to the utter bewilderment of the inattentive) is this: *one single word*,—such as “gold,” or “man,” or “triangle,” or “fever,”—will equally well apply to any one piece of gold, or individual man, or triangle, or fever &c. And so also will one single Definition [or Description] of a triangle, and hence the things themselves come to be called “one,”—the “same,” “identical” &c., because all the individuals thus named or described, are (according to the modern phrase; which is very correct) “of the same description.”

In the transferred [secondary] sense, accordingly, you may observe, that things are often spoken of as “very nearly the same, but not quite;” there being some small difference between them. In the “primary” sense on the other hand, “unity,”—“identity” &c. do not admit of degrees. For instance, “This man” either *is* or *is not*, the same person whom I saw formerly when he was an infant or child; and that, whether he differ much or little, from what he then was.

But what helps to introduce confusion, is, that “identity” in the primary sense, is in many cases judged of, and inferred, from similarity. For instance, a man may be led to swear to some picture as *the one* which he had lost, from his perceiving a perfect similarity; and yet it might perhaps be afterwards proved to his satisfaction that it was *not* that *one*, but an exact copy.

§ 11. Besides the causes of ambiguity that have been just mentioned, it is to be observed that there are several words which it is customary to employ *elliptically*; that is, in combination with something understood; and that men are apt to forget *when* it is that such a word is used with, and when, without, this ellipsis.

For instance, we speak of such a one's *possessing* £10,000 pounds; (tho' perhaps he may not *actually* possess ten pounds in money) meaning, that his whole property *would exchange for* that sum. And ordinarily, such a mode of speaking leads to no practical inconvenience. But there is no doubt that it has contributed to foster that enormous practical error known among Political Economists† as the “Mercantile System.”

So also, when any one speaks of being in distress from being “out of work” and of his “seeking for employment,” we understand him to mean “work by which he can earn a subsistence.” But great errors have often been committed by writers who have lost sight of the elliptical character of the expression, till they have practically forgotten in their reasonings that the thing really desired is, not the labour, but the gain.

To this head may perhaps be referred the ambiguity (which has been a source of endless confusion) formerly noticed (Lesson II.,) of such words as “because” &c. and again “therefore,” and several others.

When in *accounting* for the wetness which I perceive on the ground, I say, “the ground is wet *because* it has rained,” I mean (speaking at full length) to assign the “rain” as the “cause of the wetness:” when, again, I *infer* that “it has rained *because* the ground is wet,” the meaning of the word “because” is, if fully expressed, that I assign the wetness as the “cause of my belief.”

The same may be said of such words as “may,” “possible,” &c., and again, “must,” “necessary,” &c. (See Lesson X., § 8.)

When I say of a man forcibly carried off by enemies, “he *must* go wherever they conduct him,” I mean, “he cannot avoid *going*,” when I say that on his release “he *must* eagerly return to his home,” I mean that “I cannot avoid *drawing* that conclusion.”

\* See Lesson XVI., Part I., p. 37.

† See Senior's and Whately's Lectures.

So also, if I say of a man in health and at liberty, “he *may* go out or stay within,” I mean that neither going nor staying is *unavoidable* to him: but when I say of a man who is sick, that “he *may* recover,” I do not mean (as in the former case) that “this depends on *his choice*,” but that “I am not led *unavoidably* to the conclusion, that he will recover, or that he will not recover.”

§ 12. There are also other ways in which a Term may be so modified in its sense as not to have precisely the same meaning in both premises.

For you are to remember that even any one word which is not itself one of the Terms, but only a small portion of one of them, may be so understood as to affect the sense of the whole Term. Even a difference in the *position* of a word in respect of the rest, may greatly alter the sense.

For instance, “He who believes his opinion always right, deems himself infallible; you always believe your opinion right; therefore you deem yourself infallible.” Here, the premises are both true; for any opinion which you did *not* believe to be right, would plainly not be *your* opinion; and it would be difficult to deny that a man considers himself infallible, who should believe that his opinion is invariably right. But the different situation of the word “always” gives a different sense to the Middle-term in the two premises. To “think your opinion always right,” means, to have a *general* conviction respecting the *whole of your opinions collectively*, that none of them is ever wrong: but “always to think your opinion right,” means, “to have a *particular* conviction, on each occasion, *separately*, that your opinion, on that occasion, is right.”

A Fallacy of this character,—that is, where the Middle-term is taken *collectively* in one premise, and *dividedly* in the other,—is technically called the “Fallacy-of-division,” or of “composition;” according as the Middle-term is understood in a *collective-sense* in the Major-premise, and in a *divided sense* in the Minor; or vice versa.

A glaring example would be “all the apples from that tree are worth 20s.; this is an apple from that tree; therefore it is worth 20s.”

Such a fallacy has helped to give plausibility to what has been called “the doctrine of necessity.” For instance “He who necessarily goes or stays” (in reality, “who necessarily goes, or again, who necessarily stays”) is not a free-agent; you necessarily go or stay; (that is,—taking these two things *in conjunction*,—you “necessarily take the alternative”) “therefore you are not a free-agent.”

§ 13. The way in which this Fallacy usually occurs in practice, is, when something is proved, *separately*, concerning each one of several things belonging to some class; and then this is considered as having been proved concerning the whole class *collectively*; that is, concerning those things taken in *connexion with each other*.

A man, for instance, swallows a certain drug, and is seized with alarming symptoms: you shew that these symptoms may have arisen from other causes: the same drug is swallowed by another man, who is seized with like symptoms; and you shew that other causes may have produced the symptoms in him: the same may be shewn, suppose, in each separate case (considered each by itself) out of 100; and then you assume that it has been proved that all the men who have taken the drug and exhibited like symptoms may have been affected, all of them, by natural causes.

This kind of argument has been employed to refute the accounts given by the Evangelists of the miracles they record: that is, explaining *some one* of the recorded cures—considered by itself, as an accident; and then the same with another, and another; and so on.

Sometimes again a Middle-term is ambiguous from being understood in one premise in *conjunction with certain circumstances* actually pertaining to it, at a par-

ticular time &c. and, in the other premise, *independently* of those circumstances. A glaring example would be, if any one should pretend to prove (which of course would be only as a jest) that because what you have on your back was the covering of a sheep, therefore the sheep wore a coat of broadcloth. This is called in the technical language of the Latin treatises "*Fallacia accidentis*."

It is evident that when any ambiguity, of whatever kind, in a Middle-term, is suspected, the natural course is to seek for, or to demand, a *Definition* of it. Only, remember that it would be impertinent to insist, in every such case, on a *complete* definition, beyond what is requisite for removing any doubt as to the argument before us; i.e. as to the Middle-term's being employed in the same sense in both premises.

For instance if there were a discussion respecting a person's having swallowed "*poison*" and some ambiguity connected with the reasoning, were suspected in the employment of that word, it would not be necessary to give a definition such as should extend to "*every* poison," including such as savages use for their arrows: because the supposed question relates only to poisons taken into the stomach.

§ 14. The Fallacies-in-matter are divided (as has been said) into two kinds: "*undue-assumption-of-a-premise*," and "*irrelevant-conclusion*."

It is to be observed that no one is to be charged with *fallacious*-proceeding merely because he argues from Premises which we deny; or because the Conclusion he draws is not the one we would wish to see proved. For neither of these implies any *deception*.

One man may assume facts or principles which another will not admit; but provided he does this openly, and knowingly, there is no Fallacy in the case.

Or again, we may, (suppose,) wish to have it pointed out and proved *who* is the perpetrator of such and such a crime; but if the accused party prove that it was not *he*, we have no right to demand more.

But if any one is convinced by an argument based on some Premise which he would not have admitted if *distinctly put before him*, there is in this case, a Fallacy.

And so there is, if any one is satisfied, or endeavours to satisfy others, by proving some conclusion different from what he had *originally maintained*; or from what was originally proposed as the Question: or, (which comes to the same) which is the contradictory, not, of what he had *originally denied*, but of some different proposition. This is properly the Fallacy of "*irrelevant-conclusion*."

§ 15. Under the former of these two classes of Fallacy comes what is, technically, called "*begging the Question*;" that is, assuming as a Premise the very Proposition which,—in other words—is proved as the Conclusion. The way in which this is usually done is that which is commonly called, "*arguing in a Circle*:" that is, proving some Conclusion by means of a Premise which is itself deduced—more or less remotely—from premises deduced from that very Conclusion assumed as a Premise. As if you were to prove that A is B, because C is D; and that C is D, because E is F; and so on, till at length you come to infer that Y is Z *because A is B*.

Of course the *narrower* the Circle, the less likely it is to escape the detection, either of the reasoner himself, (for men often deceive *themselves* in this way) or of his hearers. When there is a long circuit of many intervening propositions before you come back to the original Conclusion, it will often not be perceived that the arguments really do proceed in a "*Circle*." Just as when any one is advancing in a *straight line* (as we are accustomed to call it) along a plain on this Earth's surface, it escapes our notice that we are really moving along the *circumference of a Circle*, (since the earth is a globe) and that if we could go on without interruption in the same line, we should at length arrive at the very spot we set

out from. But this we readily perceive, when we are walking round a small hill.

For instance if any one argues that you ought to submit to the guidance of himself, or his leader, or his party &c. because these maintain what is right; and then argues that what is so maintained is right because it is maintained by persons whom you ought to submit to; and that these are, himself and his party; or again, if any one maintains that so and so must be a thing morally wrong, because it is prohibited in the *moral portion* of the Mosaic-law, and then, that the prohibition of it does form a part of the *moral* (not the ceremonial, or the civil) portion of that Law, *because* it is a thing *morally wrong*,—either of these would be too narrow a Circle to escape detection, unless several intermediate steps were interposed. And if the *form of expression* of each proposition be *varied* every time it recurs,—the sense of it remaining the same,—this will greatly aid the deception.

Of course, the way to expose the Fallacy, is to reverse this procedure: to narrow the Circle by cutting off the intermediate steps; and to exhibit the same proposition,—when it comes round the second time,—in the same words.

§ 16. In all cases, an *unduly-assumed* premise, (i.e. one which would not be admitted if clearly stated, and deliberately considered) is the more likely to escape detection, the *longer* the train of argument is, and the greater the number of well-established propositions introduced.—When this artifice is employed, a dull or thoughtless hearer is apt to say "*there is much truth in what has been urged*." And so, perhaps, there is. There may have been introduced, in the course of the reasoning, twenty propositions, all of them true, *except one*: the denial of which *one* would nullify the whole train of arguments. A chain which has *only one* faulty link, is not indeed the stronger, but is the more likely to *appear* strong, by the addition of a great many sound links.

It also contributes to this kind of deception, to *suppress* the unduly-assumed premise; stating the argument as an Enthymeme expressing the *true* premise, and giving proofs of its truth, as if everything turned on the establishment of *that* premise.

So also, in Fallacies of the other class,—the "*irrelevant-conclusion*"—it often aids the deception, to *suppress* the *Conclusion* itself: bringing forward arguments which do indeed go to prove a Conclusion, somewhat *like* the one required, tho' not the very one: and then (instead of expressly stating the conclusion that really does follow, or again, that which had been originally maintained) a man will say "*the inference from this is plain*;" or "*I have thus established my point*;" or "*the position of our opponents is thus completely overthrown*" &c.

§ 17. The two kinds of "*Fallacy-in-Matter*," are very commonly combined in one course of argument: that is, a false or doubtful premise will be assumed as having been proved by arguments which go to prove, not *that*, but *another* proposition, somewhat like it.

For instance, instead of proving that "*this Prisoner has committed an atrocious fraud*," you prove that "*the fraud he is accused of is atrocious*:" instead of proving (as in the well-known tale of Cyrus and the two coats) that "*the taller boy had a right to force the other boy to exchange coats with him*," you prove that "*the exchange would have been advantageous to both*:" instead of proving that "*a man has not the right to educate his children or to dispose of his property in the way he thinks best*," you shew that the way in which he educates his children, or disposes of his property is not really the best: instead of proving that "*the poor ought to be relieved in this way rather than in that*," you prove that the poor ought to be relieved: instead of proving that "*an irrational-agent—whether a brute or a madman—can never be deterred from any act by apprehension of punishment*," (as for instance, a dog, from sheep-biting, by fear of being beaten) you prove



that "the beating of one dog does not operate as an example to other dogs;" &c. and then you proceed to assume as premises, conclusions different from what have really been established.

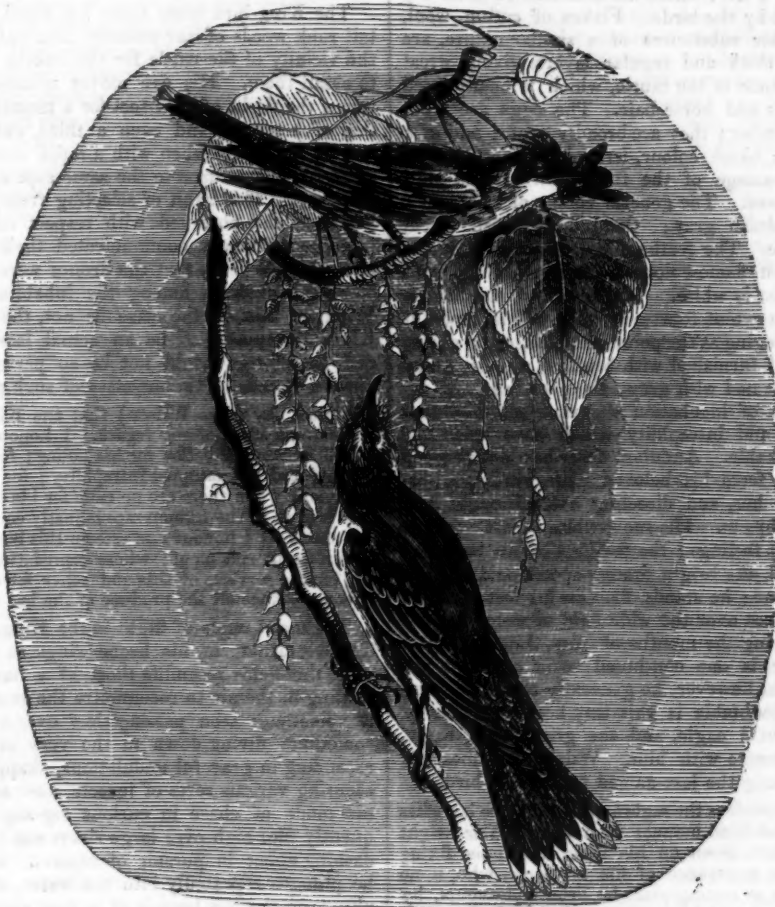
The chief difficulty in detecting any Fallacy of whatever kind, in our own reasonings, or another's, arises (as was formerly remarked) from its being usually stated in an oblique, indirect and somewhat inverted and perplexed form of expression; and more especially when diluted as it were, with a multitude of words: just as poison is more likely to escape detection when disguised

and diluted by being mixed up with a quantity of innocent ingredients, than when presented in a small concentrated dose.

The validity, or the fallaciousness, of any course of reasoning will then be made the most evident, when examined according to the foregoing rules, after laying aside all redundant words put in for mere embellishment of style, and stating the whole in the most simple language, and in regular order, as briefly as is compatible with perfect clearness.

### THE KING-BIRD, OR TYRANT FLY-CATCHER.

(*Muscicapa tyrannus*.)



THE MALE AND FEMALE KING-BIRD ON A BRANCH OF THE COTTON-WOOD TREE.

Far in the south, where vast Maragoun flows,  
And boundless forests unknown wilds inclose.  
Vine-tangled shores and suffocating woods,  
Parch'd up with heat, or drown'd with pouring floods  
Where each extreme alternately prevails,  
And nature sad their ravages bewails;  
Lo! high in air above those trackless wastes,  
With Spring's return the King-bird hither hastes;  
Coasts the famed Gulf, and from his height explores  
Its thousand streams, its long indented shores,  
Its plains immense, wide opening on the day,  
Its lakes and lakes, where feather'd millions play:  
All tempt not him: till, gazing from on high,  
Columbia's regions wide below him lie;  
There end his wanderings and his wish to roam,  
There lie his native woods, his fields, his home  
Down, circling, he descends from azure heights,  
And on a full-blown sassafras alights.—ALEX. WILSON.

found during spring and summer, and has received its trivial name of king, or tyrant, in consequence of its extraordinary behaviour, and the authority it assumes over other birds at the nesting season. Naturalists speak highly of the qualities and services of this little bird, and tell us that were they appreciated as they deserve to be, the King-bird would remain unmolested by those who now aim at his destruction. Audubon says,

Man being generally disposed to consider in his subjects a single fault sufficient to obliterate the remembrance of a thousand good qualities, even when the latter are beneficial to his interest, persecutes the King-bird without mercy, and extends his enmity to its whole progeny.

The single fault thus admitted to belong to the King-bird is his fondness for honey-bees; which often leads him to the garden on the look-out for those insects. There he plants himself on a post or fence, or on a small tree not far from the hives, and sallies out on the

THE Tyrant Fly-catcher, Field Martin, or King-bird, though destitute of song, is one of the most interesting visitors of the United States of America, where it is

bees as they pass and repass, making sad havoc among their numbers. His shrill twitter is not unobserved by the farmer, who with a gun soon closes his career, arrogating to himself, as Wilson says, "the exclusive privilege of murder," since he is in the habit of putting thousands of these same insects to death, and seizing on the fruits of their labour.

On the first arrival of the King-bird from the south, it seems for a few days fatigued and doleful, and remains perfectly silent. But no sooner has it recovered its naturally lively spirits, than its shrill twitter is heard over the fields and along the skirts of the woods. It seldom enters forests, but is fond of orchards, clover-fields, the neighbourhood of rivers, and the gardens of the planters.

The King-bird's nest is usually placed on the horizontal branch of a tree, where a foundation of small dry twigs is first laid by the birds. Flakes of cotton, wool, or tow, and other substances of a similar nature, are then placed in thick and regular layers, giving great bulk and consistence to the fabric, which is finally lined with fibrous roots and horse-hair. The eggs are from four to six in number: they are broadly ovate; and of a reddish-white, or bluish colour, irregularly spotted with brown. The plumage of the full-grown bird is soft, blended, and glossy. The general colour of the upper parts is dark bluish gray; the tail brownish black, tipped with white. The feathers on the crown of the head form a rich flame-coloured patch, margined with yellow: the breast is white. The length of the bird is eight inches, the extent fourteen. The bill is broad at the base, overhanging at the point, notched, of a glossy black colour, and furnished with bristles; the legs and feet are black, seamed with gray; the eyes hazel.

At the season of incubation the male exhibits that daring courage and intrepidity which have made the species so remarkable. Audubon describes him perched on a twig not far from his beloved mate, ready to protect and defend her, and directing every thought and action to these objects. His snow-white breast expands with the warmest feelings; the feathers of his head are raised and spread, the bright orange spot is laid open to the rays of the sun; he stands firm on his feet, and his vigilant eye glances over the wide field of vision around him. Thus, during the months of May, June, and part of July, his life is one continued scene of broils and battles; in which, however, he generally comes off conqueror. So redoubtable is this tiny hero that hawks, and crows, the bald eagle, and the great black eagle, all dread a rencontre with him. Wilson describes his method of attacking the last-named formidable bird.

As soon as he perceives the eagle approaching, he launches into the air to meet him, mounts to a considerable height above him, and darts down on his back, sometimes fixing there to the great annoyance of his sovereign, who, if no convenient retreat or resting-place be near, endeavours, by various evolutions, to rid himself of his merciless adversary. But the King-bird is not so easily dismounted. He teases the eagle incessantly, sweeps upon him from right and left, remounts, that he may descend on his back with greater violence; all the while keeping up a shrill and rapid twittering; and continuing the attack sometimes for more than a mile, till he is relieved by some other of his tribe equally eager for the contest.

The King-bird is thus a protection to the farm-yard, saving the eggs of the poultry from the plundering crow, and the chickens from the clutches of the prowling hawks, who dare not venture nigh the farm while he has his nest in the vicinity. Even the cat, we are told, in a great measure remains at home; for, should she appear, the little warrior, fearless as the boldest eagle, plunges towards her with such rapid and violent motions and so perplexes her with attempts to peck her sides, that grimalkin, ashamed of herself, returns discomfited to the house. The millions of ruinous vermin destroyed by these birds, together with the above-named services

on the farm, may well be considered sufficient to balance his love of honey-bees, and his occasional meal of raspberries and figs. Wilson thus celebrates the courage of the King-bird.

Soft sits his brooding mate; her guardian he  
Perch'd on the top of some tall neighb'ring tree;  
Thence, from the thicket to the concave skies  
His watchful eye around unceasing flies.  
Wrens, thrushes, warblers, startled at his note,  
Fly in affright the consecrated spot.  
He drives the plundering jay, with honest scorn,  
Back to his woods; the mocker to his thorn;  
Sweeps round the cuckoo as the thief retreats;  
Attacks the crow; the diving hawk defeats;  
Darts on the eagle downward from afar,  
And midst the clouds prolongs the whirling war.  
All danger o'er, he hastens back elate  
To guard his post, and feed his faithful mate.

The King-bird often takes his stand on some of the tall rank weeds of the pastures, and watches patiently in the vicinity of the cattle for the insects that are likely to assail them. His eye moves restlessly around him, traces the flight of an insect for a moment or two, then that of a second, and even a third, until he perceives one to his liking, when with a rapid sweep he pursues, seizes it, and returns to the same spot again to look out for more. This habit of selecting from several insects has been also observed with respect to bees, and some intelligent farmers communicated their opinion to the naturalist, Wilson, that the drones were always selected by this bird from among the inhabitants of the hive. Whether this be the case or not, the death of every King-bird appears to be an actual loss to the farmer, and, therefore, should not be so perseveringly accomplished as it is by the majority of such persons.

I must say (says Wilson) that the King-bird possesses no common share of my regard. I honour this little bird for his extreme affection for his young; for his contempt of danger, and unexampled intrepidity; for his meekness of behaviour when there are no calls for his courage, a quality which even in the human race is justly considered so noble; but above all I honour and esteem this bird for the millions of vermin he rids us of; whose depredations, in one season, but for the services of this and other friendly birds, would far overbalance all the produce of the bee-hives in fifty.

The usual mode of flight in the King-bird is singular. The vibrations of his broad wings as he moves slowly over the fields resemble those of a hawk hovering and settling in the air to reconnoitre the ground below. He is sometimes seen passing thus over a field of clover, sometimes diving down to the very blossoms, and re-ascending in graceful undulations, snapping his bill, and securing various sorts of insects, now and then varying his mode of chase in curious zig-zag lines. He frequently flies high over large rivers and lakes, sailing and dashing about in pursuit of insects. In warm weather he plunges repeatedly into the water, alights after each plunge on the low branch of a tree close by, shakes off the water and plumes himself.

These birds leave the Middle States earlier than most other species. They commence their migrations during the first days of September, passing in detached parties of twenty or thirty, perfectly silent, towards the south. Their flight is continued through the night, and by the 1st of October none are to be found in the Middle States. The young acquire the full colouring of their plumage before they depart for the south. Many of these birds are shot along the banks of the Mississippi, on account of their flesh, which is delicate and savoury.

Our illustration (taken from Audubon's splendid work on American birds,) represents the King-bird perched on a branch of the cotton-wood tree. This tree is a species of poplar (*Populus candicans*) growing to a great height and size, particularly along the shores of the Mississippi and Ohio, and in all alluvial grounds to the west of the Alleghany mountains.



## SEASONAL WILD FLOWERS.

## AUGUST.

Fair is rich August's golden crown;  
But few the blossoms newly blown.  
Yet of those few are some that vie  
With Flora's fairest family,  
In grace, if not in sweet perfume.—MANT'S *British Months*.

WHILE many of the blossoms of former months continue to enliven our lanes and hedges, and while we are yet unable to detect any diminution in the quantity of flowering plants, except where the mower's scythe has cleared the fields and meadows of their plenteous crop, we still find that, at this season of the year, the new comers are comparatively few, and we meet in all our walks with a repetition of familiar forms, rather than with the succession of novelties which rendered the earlier months of the year so full of interest.

But several of these later productions are extremely beautiful, as well as remarkable for peculiarities of structure, that may worthily arrest our attention.

Of these we shall first name the Grass of Parnassus (*Parnassia palustris*), belonging to the Saxifrage tribe.

Parnassian Grass, with chalice bloom,  
And globes nectareous, like the earl's  
Rich coronet, beset with pearls.

This is one of our most elegant native plants, growing in marshy places, and very common in Scotland. Dr. Lindley's excellent description of this plant may recall it to the recollection of such of our readers as may have met with it, without being able to give it a name.

The leaves and stems are hairless, but there is a most extraordinary glandular apparatus in the flowers. The leaves of this plant are heart-shaped, and cluster round the base of the stem. The latter rises to the height of a few inches, bearing below its middle a solitary stalkless leaf, similar in form to those of the base, and on its point a single nodding white flower, whose petals are so beautifully marked by diverging sunken veins of a greenish colour, that a fanciful person might liken them to rivulets of chrysopræse flowing over a bed of snow. The glandular apparatus I have spoken of, consists of five fleshy scales, alternating with the stamens, and divided at their edge into numerous rays, each tipped with one beautiful pellucid greenish gland; so that the whole interior of the flower, when inspected from above, seems to bristle with a guard of fairy lances, tipped with sparkling jewels. I know of no natural object more exquisitely beautiful than this little flower, which you may cultivate for a few months by keeping its roots in wet bog moss, and covering it with a bell-glass fully exposed to the light.

The Grass of Parnassus belongs to the same tribe with that pretty little plant, so common in cottagers' gardens, called London Pride (*Saxifraga umbrosa*). The name familiarly given to this species of Saxifrage points it out as capable of enduring the smoke and impure air of cities; and we find it flourishing well in London gardens, but its natural situation is on hilly land. It grows abundantly on the Yorkshire and Irish mountains, spreading out in great profusion its graceful panicles of delicate little pink and white star-like flowers. This plant has a very pretty appearance in gardens when growing among rock-work, or at the foot of flowering shrubs. It propagates itself so fast from offsets that it is seldom raised from seed. Few flowers, indeed, demand so little care in cultivation.

In this and the following month a beautiful plant adorns the moist, turfey heaths of the county of Norfolk, and of the north of England; but it is not sufficiently common to be generally known even in those situations. This is—

The beauty of the *Gentian* race,  
Whose "gallant flow'rs with bravery" grace,  
Or chalky down, or meadow wet,  
The blue Calathian violet.

The Marsh Gentian, or Calathian Violet, (*Gentiana*

*pneumonanthe*), is a perennial plant: the root is formed of long, tapering fibres; the leaves are sessile; the stem rises four or five inches high; the flowers are large, handsome, and of a deep vivid blue; the anthers pale yellow. The *Gentian* tribe consists of plants that are remarkable for the bitter principle they contain; the roots forming one of the principal bitters of European growth. That which is principally used in medicine is the root of the great yellow *Gentian* (*Gentiana lutea*), which is imported from Germany. The generic name of these plants is given to them after *Gentius*, king of Illyria, who is said to have first experienced the tonic effects of the bitter principle they contain. On this subject we find the following in the *Flora Historica*.

It is now about two thousand years since the medicinal virtues of this bitter plant were discovered by *Gentius*, king of Illyricum, who afterwards drank so deeply of the bitter cup of fortune. This monarch, having broken the most sacred laws of nations, by imprisoning the ambassadors that were sent to his court by the Romans, it so roused the resentment of these warlike people, that they invaded his kingdom, and being conquered by *Anicius*, both himself and family were led in triumph through the streets of Rome. In justice to this royal botanist the plant was called *Gentiana* by the Latins, and it is now the universal name wherever the European languages are known; and it would not be inappropriate to add this flower to the heraldic arms of all ambassadors whilst in office, as a memento, that their persons should be considered equally sacred with that of their sovereign, or the country which they represent.

Plants of the *Gentian* tribe are generally so difficult to manage in England, that there are only three or four of the more hardy species that repay in any degree the trouble of the gardener. Among these the *Gentianella* is the best known, and is a very good specimen of the peculiar richness of colour which distinguishes these plants. Belonging to the same tribe, and partaking of the same medicinal qualities, are the different species of *Centaurium*, of which the common *Centaurium* (*Erythraea centaurium*) is still to be seen in blossom. It is a pretty plant, growing in dry sunny places, and in gravelly pastures. The leaves grow in a cluster from the root, and are about an inch long; the stalks divide into branches, and the flowers, which are long, slender, and of a bright pink colour, stand in clusters on them. The leaves growing upon the stalk are oblong, and acute at the point. This plant possesses an agreeable bitter, and might be used as a stomachic instead of the *Gentian* root.

Towards the close of the month the Meadow Saffron (*Colchicum autumnale*) begins to throw up its reddish purple flowers. This curious plant exhibits no leaves until the following spring, and as the flower comes up too late in the season for the due perfection of the seeds, these are buried in seed-vessels lodged in the bosom of the embryo leaves, and are consequently thrust forth with the foliage in April. This remarkable provision for the propagation of the plant, together with the places in which we may expect to find it, is thus noticed by Bishop Mant:—

To Suffolk, where the abbey'd town  
Still keeps its martyr'd king's renown;  
To Glo'ster springs salubrious go,  
Or where through Wor'ster pastures flow  
Broad Severn's waves; or swoln with rills  
That fall from Derby's rocky hills,  
Wild Darwent hastens to present  
His tribute to majestic Trent;  
Or go to Monmouth's level meads  
Where Wye the gentle Monnow weds;  
Long brilliant tubes of purple hue  
The ground in countless myriads strew.  
Anon, but brief the space between,  
No more those countless tubes are seen:  
The meads their verdant cloke resume;  
And with that evanescent bloom,

You deem perhaps its spirit fled,  
Abortive, virtuous, and dead.

You deem amiss. Within the breast  
Secure of parent earth, the chest  
That holds the embryo fruit, is laid:  
Thither by the long tube convey'd,  
Safe from the force of wintry skies  
Conceal'd the buried virtue lies.  
Till spring-tide from the fostering earth  
Shall wake the meditated birth,  
The germs on its stalk display'd  
And with embracing leaves array'd:  
And when the vernal grasses' bloom  
Shall spread the hay-field's rich perfume,  
Bright June mature in timely hour  
The seeds of August's early flower!

This plant was called *Colchicum* from its growing abundantly in the vicinity of Colchis, a city of Armenia, celebrated for its numerous poisonous plants. Every part of the plant contains a powerful principle called *Colchicia*. A tincture of the bulb or of the seeds of *Colchicum* has been found very useful in the relief of gout and rheumatism, but it ought never to be used without medical advice, because in an over-dose it becomes a virulent poison. The poisonous properties of the plant seem well known to animals, for in the spring when the leaves appear among the grass, it is no uncommon thing to see all the other herbage eaten down close, when not a leaf of the Meadow Saffron has been touched. This poisonous plant must be distinguished from the autumnal Saffron *Crocus* (*Crocus sativus*), which blossoms about the same time, and which was formerly so much cultivated for the saffron obtained from it. The stigmata of the purple *crocus* are of a deep orange colour, and when in quantity have a peculiar odour; they are now used chiefly as a colouring matter, their medicinal properties being of little import. Saffron is now chiefly imported from Spain; but it is inferior in quality to the produce of our own country. There is some doubt whether we may claim the Saffron *Crocus* as a native plant; but it is one of much beauty, and deserves extensive cultivation.

In the present month we see in their greatest beauty the few wild species of Heath which adorn our land, and which, though they cannot vie with the cultivated varieties from the Cape of Good Hope, are still some of the most interesting among wild flowers. The common Ling (*Calluna vulgaris*) covers many hundreds of acres in the Highlands of Scotland, in Ireland, and in similar climates on the Continent. This is the species that

O'er the Caledonian hills sublime  
Spreads its dark mantle (where the bees delight  
To seek their purest honey)

In our own country it also flourishes together with the Fine-leaved Heath (*Erica cinerea*).

Sometimes with bells like amethysts, and then  
Paler and shaded like a maiden's cheek  
With gradual blushes; other while as white  
As rime that hangs upon the frozen spray.

This tribe of plants is spoken of by Dr. Lindley as having such charming colours, and being "set off by so clear a complexion, and such perfect forms, that there is little comparable to them in the whole vegetable kingdom."

Any one who has seen the numerous cultivated varieties reared in green-houses, will fully agree in this praise of the Heath tribe; but according to the African traveller Barrow, the splendid specimens of Cape heaths that form the pride of European collections, are by no means attractive in their native soil. He says that sometimes one or two species, jagged by the winds or shrivelled by drought, spread over large tracts of country, giving it the appearance of our barren heaths; and even those which grow in boggy situations, though larger, are not nearly so beautiful as when cultivated.

The moors of England, Ireland and Scotland, cannot boast much variety in the kind of heath they bear; but they present a fine rich tint of glowing purple, when they are ornamented by their innumerable heath-bells. It is the fine-leaved or common heath which chiefly gives this tint, sometimes blended with the paler colours of the ling. The common ling attains in some situations the height of three or four feet; it is much used in thatching houses, making brooms, and other purposes. The tender tops form a substitute for mattresses in Highland cottages, and are used as fodder for cattle. The seeds of this and of the other varieties afford food to numerous birds, and the whole plant supplies cover to grouse, and is therefore prized by the sportsman.

Flower of the waste! the heath-fowl shuns  
For thee the brake and tangled wood;  
To thy protecting shade she runs,  
Thy tender buds supply her food;  
Her young forsake her downy plumes,  
To rest upon thy opening blooms

Flower of the wild! whose purple glow  
Adorns the dusky mountain's side;  
Not the gay hues of Iris' bow,  
Nor garden's artful, varied pride,  
With all its wealth of sweets, could cheer,  
Like thee, the hardy mountaineer.

There is another tribe of plants to which we must briefly allude ere we close our observations for the month. It is called the Buck-wheat tribe, and contains many common plants now in blossom or ripening their seed. Perhaps the best known and the most generally disliked of all its families is the Dock, the pest and annoyance of the farmer. Buck-wheat itself (*Polygonum Fagopyrum*) is cultivated for its fruit, contained in little hard seed-vessels which is used in rearing pheasants, and is also converted into flour, to be mixed with wheat-flour in making crumpets. This plant has beautiful rose-coloured flowers. The culinary plants sorrel and rhubarb belong to this tribe; but the plants we would more particularly notice, are the common weeds called Knot-grass. These in their different varieties abound in every neglected garden walk, or in the most sterile and stony ground. Common Knot-grass (*Polygonum aviculare*) will grow where not even a stonecrop can take root, spreading out its slender wiry stems on the hard beaten pathway, or among the dust and rubbish of dry banks. The flowers are very minute, growing at the base of the leaves. The stem is many-jointed, frequently of a reddish tint at the joints. There are many other wild plants closely allied to knot-grass; a handsome species, called Amphibious Persicaria (*Polygonum amphibium*), flourishes in ditches, ponds, and rivers, and is very common. The flowers are rose-coloured, in beautiful dense spikes. The leaves float on the water, and are then smooth and slightly heart-shaped; but when the plant comes up in dry ditches the leaves are narrower and hairy, and the stem shorter. Several of the species of Polygonum are called Persicaria, on account of the foliage of the kind principally used in medicine being similar to that of the Peach Tree (*Persica*). There is a species called Biting Persicaria, also growing in ditches and pools, which is distinguished by an acrid burning taste, supposed to reside in glandular dots sprinkled over it. Country people sometimes chew the pungent leaves for the cure of tooth-ache. Linnæus says, that all domestic quadrupeds reject this plant, and that when gathered in full blossom and dried, it preserves wardrobes and other places from the attacks of insects.

Throughout this month we are scarcely sensible of the diminution of wild flowers, but ere long we shall look in vain for new-comers to supply the places of those which are now fading before our eyes.